

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A method for distributor/supplier selection in a supply chain utilizing a network,
2 comprising the acts of:
 - 3 a) collecting information relating to a plurality distributors/suppliers of a supply
4 chain;
 - 5 b) selecting at least one of the distributors/suppliers based on the collected
6 information;
 - 7 c) populating a contract based on the selected distributors/suppliers, the contract
8 mandating that the selected distributors/suppliers provide supply chain data; and
 - 9 d) managing the supply chain utilizing the supply chain data.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the management of the supply chain includes
2 tracking benchmark performance utilizing the supply chain data.
- 1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the management of the supply chain includes
2 monitoring adherence to the contract utilizing the supply chain data.
- 1 4. The method of claim 1, wherein the information is collected in response to a
2 plurality of requests for proposal transmitted to the distributors/suppliers utilizing
3 the network.
- 1 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the distributors/suppliers are selected based on a
2 least cost analysis.
- 1 6. The method of claim 5, wherein the least cost analysis involves entities selected
2 from the group consisting of a price of product, a cost of shipping the product,
3 and a cost of re-distribution of the product.

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- 1 7. The method of claim 5, wherein the least cost analysis involves a price of product,
2 a cost of shipping the product, and a cost of re-distribution of the product.
- 1 8. The method of claim 5, wherein the least cost analysis involves capacities of the
2 distributors/suppliers and requirements of a plurality of outlets of the supply
3 chain.
- 1 9. The method of claim 5, wherein the least cost analysis includes a tiered least cost
2 analysis.
- 1 10. The method of claim 5, wherein the least cost analysis is standardized.
- 1 11. The method of claim 1, wherein the management of the supply chain includes
2 collecting profit information utilizing the supply chain data in real-time.
- 1 12. The method of claim 1, wherein the management of the supply chain includes
2 paying the selected distributors/suppliers rebates.
- 1 13. A system for distributor/supplier selection in a supply chain utilizing a network,
2 comprising:
3 a) logic for collecting information relating to a plurality distributors/suppliers of a
4 supply chain;
5 b) logic for selecting at least one of the distributors/suppliers based on the collected
6 information;
7 c) logic for populating a contract based on the selected distributors/suppliers, the
8 contract mandating that the selected distributors/suppliers provide supply chain
9 data; and
10 d) logic for managing the supply chain utilizing the supply chain data.
- 1 14. The system of claim 13, wherein the management of the supply chain includes
2 tracking benchmark performance utilizing the supply chain data.

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- 1 15. The system of claim 13, wherein the management of the supply chain includes
2 monitoring adherence to the contract utilizing the supply chain data.
- 1 16. The system of claim 13, wherein the information is collected in response to a
2 plurality of requests for proposal transmitted to the distributors/suppliers utilizing
3 the network.
- 1 17. The system of claim 13, wherein the distributors/suppliers are selected based on a
2 least cost analysis.
- 1 18. The system of claim 13, wherein the management of the supply chain includes
2 collecting profit information utilizing the supply chain data in real-time.
- 1 19. The system of claim 13, wherein the management of the supply chain includes
2 paying the selected distributors/suppliers rebates.
- 1 20. A computer program product for distributor/supplier selection in a supply chain
2 utilizing a network, comprising:
 - 3 a) computer code for collecting information relating to a plurality
4 distributors/suppliers of a supply chain;
 - 5 b) computer code for selecting at least one of the distributors/suppliers based on the
6 collected information;
 - 7 c) computer code for populating a contract based on the selected
8 distributors/suppliers, the contract mandating that the selected
9 distributors/suppliers provide supply chain data; and
 - 10 d) computer code for managing the supply chain utilizing the supply chain data.